



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2010-166

TO: District Superintendents
Principals

FROM: Jim McBride, Ed.D. 

DATE: September 17, 2010

SUBJECT: Light the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree

TIME SENSITIVE – INFORMATION TO SHARE

Help one student from your school be selected to light the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree.

For the first time in US history, Wyoming has been selected to provide the tree for the U.S. Capitol during the Christmas celebrations.

In addition, Wyoming citizens are making 5,000 handcrafted ornaments that accompany this gift to the nation from the people of Wyoming.

One lucky Wyoming student who makes an ornament will be selected for a trip to Washington, D.C. with a guardian -- all expenses paid -- for the special lighting ceremony at the U.S. Capitol and be the one to flip the switch to turn on the display of celebration lights for Wyoming's 67-foot Engelmann Spruce.

We are inviting Wyoming schools to participate in this special projects and asking students and teachers to make 3,000 pieces to meet the 5,000 ornament benchmark.

Creative projects are in the works -- the Laramie High School classes are making ornaments of beetle killed wood. The Riverton school system has pledged to make many ornaments and their work is underway.

I encourage you to be a part of this important and historic project.

Below are specifications and more details as to the effort. Please don't hesitate to call the numbers listed below for more information.

Thank you!

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The ornaments should depict our theme, "Wyoming Forever West," and will provide wonderful opportunities for Wyoming school children to demonstrate what Wyoming means to them. Whether they represent our world-renowned landscapes, our diverse cultures, or other aspects of our state, the ornaments will help convey the particular beauty that is Wyoming.

While the ornaments must conform to some specific criteria, it is amazing to see the superb creativity generated by school teachers and their students. Old compact discs cut and fitted together like fish or birds, large glittery pine cones, wire creations with bits of evergreen or large feathers twirling in the wind, woven grasses and stalks of grain tied with swirls of ribbon, and wooden mountains or wildlife silhouettes are just a few of the ideas one can glean from past years' efforts.

You can visit our website at www.capitolchristmastree.org to discover more about the Wyoming project.

To be used by the Capitol Architect on the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree in 2010, ornaments must be:

- Lightweight (less than 1 pound), and have 12-15 inches of 20 gauge wire securely attached to the top corners for hanging.
- Durable and weatherproof, as they will be hung on an outside tree for at least three weeks of winter weather.
- 9 to 12 inches in size with a large, easy-to-view design, so they can be enjoyed from some distance. Many will be placed high on the 70 foot tall tree.
- Made of, or decorated with reflective, colorful materials.
- Three dimensional, and decorated on all sides, for best viewing from all sides.
- Made of durable materials such as metal, wood or recycled materials. NO glass can be accepted.

Since we cannot guarantee that all ornaments will be used on the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree and since the ornaments are used only once then either recycled or donated to charities, ornament makers are cautioned about using materials of much monetary value. No ornaments can be returned to the maker.

For additional information, please contact Pam Bode at 307-739-5513 or Mary Cernicek at 307-739-5564.

Thank you.